

EXHIBIT 16

THE HONORABLE JAMAL N. WHITEHEAD

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

PLAINTIFF PACITO; PLAINTIFF ESTHER;
PLAINTIFF JOSEPHINE; PLAINTIFF SARA;
PLAINTIFF ALYAS; PLAINTIFF MARCOS;
PLAINTIFF AHMED; PLAINTIFF RACHEL;
PLAINTIFF ALI; HIAS, INC.; CHURCH
WORLD SERVICE, INC.; and LUTHERAN
COMMUNITY SERVICES NORTHWEST,

Plaintiffs,

v.

DONALD J. TRUMP, in his official capacity as
President of the United States; MARCO RUBIO,
in his official capacity as Secretary of State;
KRISTI NOEM, in her official capacity as
Secretary of Homeland Security; DOROTHY A.
FINK, in her official capacity as Acting Secretary
of Health and Human Services,

Defendants.

Case No. C25-255 JNW

**DECLARATION OF PLAINTIFF
JOSEPHINE**

DECLARATION OF PLAINTIFF JOSEPHINE – 1
(No. C25-255 JNW)

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DECLARATION OF JOSEPHINE

I, Josephine, declare as follows:

1. I am 28 years old, and I am of sound mind.
2. I am waiting to travel to the United States as a refugee and to reunite with my family who live in Idaho. My mother filed a "follow-to-join" petition for me in 2017.
3. I was on the verge of travel to the United States when I learned that I could not travel because of President Trump's refugee suspension.
4. I live in Durban, South Africa.
5. I was born in Democratic Republic of the Congo ("DRC").
6. My mother, my mother's husband, and three of my siblings live in the United States in Boise, Idaho.
7. My family entered the United States as refugees in or around 2016.
8. When I was very young, my family and I fled Congo because of the danger we faced during the civil war.
9. We eventually came to a refugee camp in Tanzania, and I spent most of my childhood there.
10. Life was difficult and dangerous for everyone, especially for young women like me. The camp was not a safe place for young women. I was afraid.
11. I also wanted to go to school, but the educational opportunities were very limited. Many girls became pregnant at a young age. Most girls stopped going to school early.
12. My mother told me she was worried about my safety and she supported my desire to find a safer place where I could live and study. In or around 2012, when I was around 15, I left the camp and went to South Africa.

13. My mother, her husband, and my siblings stayed behind in the refugee camp. My mother had applied to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program and she was waiting for her application to be processed.
14. Eventually, my mother, her husband, and my three brothers were resettled to the United States as refugees.
15. In 2017, my mother applied for me to join her as a refugee in the United States through the “follow-to-join” process.
16. The process took many years.
17. Eventually, I was conditionally approved for refugee resettlement, I completed medical exams and security checks, and I received an assurance from a resettlement agency in the United States. I provided my passport to the consulate for more processing.
18. After President Trump’s inauguration, he ordered a suspension in refugee admissions that he said would begin on January 27. I understood that refugees like me were still allowed to travel to the United States before that date.
19. My understanding is that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) generally organizes travel for refugees. I asked whether I could organize my travel on my own because I was desperate to go to the United States before the ban took effect. But I did not get a clear answer.
20. I learned my travel documents were ready at the consulate. I decided to make travel arrangements without IOM, and I was able to get a ticket leaving South Africa for the United States in the evening of January 24, three days before the refugee ban was scheduled to begin.

21. Then I packed my bags and gave away many of my belongings. I terminated my rental agreement with my landlord.
22. Early in the morning on January 24, I went to the consulate and asked to pick up my travel documents. I spoke with a consulate official who said they could not give me my travel documents unless they got permission. They told me to wait outside the consulate to see if they heard back.
23. I waited the whole day, but I never heard from the official again. I could not get on my flight without the travel documents.
24. I stayed overnight in Johannesburg and went back to the consulate the next day—Saturday, January 25—to see if I could speak with the consular official. The security guards told me there was no one available to see me.
25. Later that day, I spoke with IOM and asked if they could help me. The official I spoke to said there was nothing IOM could do because State Department guidance directed a stop to all refugee processing.
26. When I learned that I would not be allowed to travel because of the refugee suspension, I was so upset. My refugee process had been so prolonged and full of uncertainty. Just when I thought a door had finally opened for me, it slammed in my face.
27. It is so hard for me to continue to be separated from my family. I was planning to live with my mother, her husband, and two of my siblings in Idaho.
28. My mother needs me badly now. One of my brothers recently died unexpectedly, and my mother tells me she is feeling heartbroken. She has had a very hard life as a refugee, and I want to help her and support her during this difficult time. I have no words I can say to her now, but if I could at least be with her, I think I could bring her some peace.

29. I had hoped to find work in the United States. I would like to do some kind of work related to helping children. But my plan was to work anywhere I could to support myself and my family in the United States.
30. But I am still in South Africa. I have given up my lease and given away my possessions. I am struggling to survive.
31. Life in South Africa as a refugee is very difficult. Police arbitrarily arrest and detain refugees. Private citizens discriminate against and harass refugees, and police refuse to protect us.
32. I fear that if my real name becomes public in this lawsuit, I will be in danger because people in my community will learn that I am a refugee trying to resettle to the United States, and they may harass and even hurt me, and the police will not protect me. I do not talk about my history as a refugee or my plans to travel to the United States with people in my community for this reason.
33. I understand that some people in the United States have been publishing the names and personal details online of people who criticize the Trump Administration, and I am very fearful that if my name is shared in this lawsuit, that this could put me in danger and put my family at risk of harassment and threats.
34. I fear that if my real name becomes public in this lawsuit, my pending refugee application could be jeopardized. My application remains pending and is in final stages of processing, and I do not want my participation in the lawsuit to delay or prevent me from coming to safety in the United States.
35. For these reasons, I believe that my personal security and well-being and that of my family necessitates that I be allowed to use a pseudonym in this case.

36. I am willing to serve as a class representative on behalf of those who are similarly situated to me who are trying to seek safety in the United States through the refugee program, including through the follow-to-join process.
37. I know that if the class is certified, I will be representing more than just myself in this case. I will be representing the interests of other refugees. I understand what being a class representative means.
38. I want to help everyone in my situation because I always have the heart to help, wherever I have the opportunity to help someone I am willing. I know that refugees like me are struggling, I have lived many years as a refugee, so I know how desperate people are for a change. I am willing to be actively involved in this lawsuit as a class representative and to work with my attorneys to help all of the class members.

I declare under penalty of perjury
under the laws of the United States
that the foregoing is true and correct

executed in Durban, South Africa on
February 9, 2025

Signature

REDACTED